

NSC BRIEFING

22
DOCUMENT NO. 2002/05/07 : CIA-RDP79R00890A000700050027-8

DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C

NEXT REVIEW DATE: _____

AUTH: HR 70-2

DATE: 1-14-80 REVIEWER: _____

17 MAY 1956

SOUTH KOREAN ELECTION

25X1

I. In an orderly election, which has shown substantial increase in opposition to Syngman Rhee's administration, the Chief not of interest is the still unsettled Vice Presidential race between Rhee's running-partner, Yi Ki-pung and the Democratid Party vice presidential candidate, Chang Myon (also known as John Chang, former Prime Minister, former Ambassador to US). Here is the record on the voting:

	<u>60% complete</u>	<u>89% complete</u>	<u>95% complete</u>
Chang Myon	2,725,982	3,578,079	3,786,782
Yi Ki-Pung	2,310,139	3,233,217	3,639,310

A. Thus, by 3:30 on 17 May, Chang's lead over Yi had been whittled to about 150,000 votes. Unless fraud is involved, however, it appears unlikely that Yi can close this gap.

II. Rhee won the presidential race with 5,045,48 votes--around 55% of the vote--in contrast to his 75% win in '52. Rest of presidential vote was split between the Progressive, Cho, and the late Sin Ik-hui (invalid ballots).

A. The strong opporition showing is remarkable on two counts: first, the police were giving Rhee's slate strong support. Second, the death of Sin in mid-campaign caused confusion.

B. If Chnag's lead of Yi remains, when the count is final,

Rhee may decide to revise the rules of succession to Presidency.

III. Three minor vice presidential candidates including Yi Pon-sok, were washed out at the polls. the results in South Korea reflect the increasing importance attached to political parties rather than as opposed to personalities.